

**Accreditation Visit for Professional Preparation Programs at
Los Angeles County Office of Education
Professional Services Division**

June 25, 2009

Overview of this Report

This agenda report includes the findings of the team on the accreditation visit conducted at the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE). The report presents the findings based upon reading the Institutional Self-Study Report, review of supporting documentation, and interviews with representative constituencies. On the basis of the report, an accreditation recommendation of **Accreditation** is made for the institution.

LACOE offers only the Designated Subjects Credentials: Adult Education, Career Technical Education (Vocational Education) and Supervision and Coordination. As such, they are not currently held to the 2008 Common Standards. As they revise their program to meet the newly adopted standards, the Common Standards will be fully addressed by the institution. The Supervision and Coordination program was not reviewed as a part of the visit as the design of the credential and standards are under review. Therefore, this report provides advisory comments related to the Common Standards that may help LACOE staff as they prepare their responses and redesign their program. All program standards for both Adult Education and Career Technical Education are addressed.

Common Standards (2008)

Common Standard	Advisory Comments
Standard 1: Education Leadership	This Common Standard calls for a “research based” vision for the program. This differs from the current program standard that asks for an “appropriate design which is based on a logical rationale” and will need to be addressed. A second part of the Common Standard that will need attention is the organization, governance and coordination of the program “with the active involvement of program faculty and relevant stakeholders” .
Standard 2: Unit And Program Assessment and Evaluation	Although there is collection of data, much of it at this point is self assessment of candidates and faculty. There will need to be evidence of a process that involves stakeholders in data analysis and data-based decision making.
Standard 3: Resources	Review current structure and personnel to determine if there are ways to use technological tools (databases, on-line surveys, etc.) and personnel in more efficient ways that may more adequately address candidate and district needs. The review of the current structure may reveal that there are not adequate personnel to address the workload.

Common Standard	Advisory Comments
Standard 4: Faculty and Instructional Personnel	The unit has articulated plans to evaluate current recruitment and hiring procedures. The team recommends that they continue with the plans.
Standard 5: Admission	The unit may need to consider this part of the Common Standard in particular, "The unit determines that admitted candidates have appropriate pre-professional experiences and personal characteristics, including sensitivity to California's diverse population, effective communication skills, basic academic skills, and prior experiences that suggest a strong potential for professional effectiveness."
Standard 6: Advice and Assistance	The unit may need to consider this part of the Common Standard in particular," Qualified members of the unit are assigned and available to advise applicants and candidates about their academic, professional and personal development, and to assist in their professional placement."
Standard 7: Field Experience and Clinical Practice	n/a
Standard 8: District Employed Supervisors	n/a
Standard 9: Assessment of Candidate Competence	The unit will need to determine how to address the field components of the new program standards and use this information to help determine candidate competence.

Program Standards

	Total Program Standards	Program Standards		
		Met	Met with Concerns	Not Met
Designated Subjects: Adult Education	19	17	2	0
Designated Subjects: Vocational/Career Technical Education	15	13	2	0

The site visit was completed in accordance with the procedures approved by the Committee on Accreditation regarding the activities of the site visit:

- Preparation for the Accreditation Visit
- Preparation of the Institutional Self-Study Report
- Selection and Composition of the Accreditation Team
- Intensive Evaluation of Program Data

Committee on Accreditation Accreditation Team Report

Institution: Los Angeles County Office of Education
Dates of Visit: May 17-20, 2009
Team Recommendation: Accreditation

Accreditation Recommendations

The Team recommends that, based on the attached Accreditation Team Report, the Committee on Accreditation make the following accreditation decision for the Los Angeles County Office of Education Designated Subjects credential programs: **ACCREDITATION**.

Rationale:

The unanimous recommendation of **Accreditation** was based on a thorough review of the institutional self-study; additional supporting documents available during the visit; interviews with administrators, faculty, candidates, graduates, and local school personnel; along with additional information requested from program leadership during the visit. The team obtained sufficient and consistent information that led to a high degree of confidence in making overall and programmatic judgments about the professional education unit's operation. The decision pertaining to the accreditation status of the institution was based upon the following:

All Program Standards were found to be met with two being met with concerns. They are:

Program Standard 3: Resources Allocated to the Program and

Program Standard 6: Program Development and Evaluation.

The finding of met with concerns for both standards is applied to both the Adult Education and Career Technical Education (Vocational Education).

On the basis of this recommendation, the institution is authorized to recommend candidates for the following Credentials:

- Designated Subjects: Adult Education Credential
- Designated Subjects: Vocational (Career Technical) Education Teaching Credential
- Designated Subjects: Supervision and Coordination

Staff recommends that:

- The institution's response to the preconditions be accepted.
- Los Angeles County Office of Education be permitted to propose new credential programs for approval by the Committee on Accreditation.
- Los Angeles County Office of Education continue in its assigned cohort on the schedule of accreditation activities, subject to the continuation of the present schedule of accreditation activities by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

Accreditation Team

Team Lead:

Helene Mandell

Director of Professional Services
University of San Diego

Team Members:

Peter Cheoros

Retired Teacher, Lynnwood School District

Bill Kellogg

Professor, California State University, San Luis Obispo

Jim O'Connor

Dean of Education, Touro University

Staff to the Accreditation Team

Jo Birdsell, Consultant

Documents Reviewed

Candidate Portfolios

Institutional Self Study

Course Syllabi

Candidate Files

Program Handbook

Instructor Handbook

Information Booklet

Website

Candidate Work Samples

Biennial Report

Advisement Documents

Faculty Vitae

Program Evaluation Data

Candidate Curriculum Binders

Interviews Conducted

	Team Leader	Designated Subjects Cluster	TOTAL
Program Faculty	3	32	35
Institutional Administration	9	11	20
Candidates	29	91	120
Program Completers	4	31	35
Employers of Graduates	5	9	14
Staff	0	7	7
Credential Analysts/Advisors	1	5	6
Advisory Committee	6	4	10
TOTALS	57	190	247

Note: In some cases, individuals were interviewed by more than one team member because of multiple roles. Thus, the number of interviews conducted exceeds the actual number of individuals interviewed.

Background Information

The Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE), Career and Workforce Development/Regional Occupational Program (CWD/ROP), is an approved Commission on Teacher Credentialing Local Education Agency. The Credential Services unit of CWD/ROP provides the coursework to prepare teachers to earn the Designated Subjects Credential. LACOE offers only the Designated Subjects Credentials: Adult Education, Career Technical Education and Supervision and Coordination.

Candidates in the program can be from anywhere in California. LACOE serves the 23 surrounding school districts and has candidates from Indio to Siskiyou County. There are other local programs offering the Designated Subjects credential. However, interviews with several candidates and program completers indicated that they chose the LACOE program after having taken coursework elsewhere that they deemed less effective.

The current Project Director was named two years ago. The previous Project Director had been in the office for approximately fifteen years. New leadership and requirements to participate in accreditation have brought changes to the program in several ways. Most stakeholders who were interviewed expressed very positive comments about the changes implemented within the last two years.

The unit negotiates Memorandum of Understanding in order to offer courses at public schools and other locations convenient for candidates. Although courses are offered at various locations, key elements of the syllabi, such as the course objectives, texts and class schedule sessions remain the same. According to the Institutional Self Study Report, there are 17 instructional personnel who teach in the program.

Credential Program

Candidates are referred to the program by local employers as they are hired to teach specific courses. Some candidates (approximately 10%) are not employed and seek the credential in anticipation of gaining a teaching position. In order to enter the program and be recommended for a Designated Subjects Level I credential, a candidate needs to show a combination of five years of industry experience or equivalent college work, and indication of an employment opportunity,

The majority of candidates apply for a credential with an offer of employment and learn to teach while teaching. Candidates have two years after the granting of the credential to begin the program. The Level I program addresses basic classroom organization and management as well as lesson planning. There are currently no Program Standards that address field supervision, therefore determination of candidate competence related to classroom performance is difficult for the program to determine. However, employers evaluate candidate competence and make determinations as to whether an offer of employment will be renewed. Candidates for both Adult Education and Career/Technical Education take coursework for Level I together and Level II together. The curriculum is differentiated by the projects that candidates complete in their content area relative to their instructional setting.

To complete Level I candidates take a 90 hour course with 40 hours in class and a 50 hour project. Instructors provide feedback on activities presented in class through demonstration or examination or both. Candidates complete a portfolio on their project. Competencies to complete Level I is a transcript indicating the appropriate number of units with passing grades. Candidates must also complete four semesters of teaching in their credential area.

To complete Level II candidate take a 90 hour course with 40 hours in class and a 50 hour project. Instructors provide feedback on activities presented in class through demonstration or examination. At the current time there is no pre-service requirement that indicates candidate competence of teaching skills, or the dispositional characteristics to be a successful classroom teacher.

Table 1
Program Review Status

Program Name: Designated Subjects	Number of Candidates Enrolled or Admitted in the 2008 calendar year (January-December)
Level I: Adult Education and Career/Technical Education	428
Level II: Adult Education and Career/Technical Education	332
Level III: Supervision and Coordination	21
TOTAL	781

The Visit

The visit to Los Angeles County Office of Education began on Sunday, May 17, 2009 at 12:00 p.m. when team members first met at the hotel. Following the team meeting, a reception was held at the county office. At the reception, team members met with County Office administrators, program coordinators, instructors and candidates. Interviews and examination of documents occurred on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday. One classroom was visited by two team members on Tuesday afternoon. The team met with the Project Director on Tuesday morning for the mid-visit report. On Tuesday afternoon and evening the team met to discuss all standards and programs. Consensus was reached on all standard findings with a resulting accreditation recommendation. The Exit Report was held at the county office on Wednesday, May 20, 2009.

Designated Subjects Credential Program Adult Education and Vocational Education

Findings on Standards:

The Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) collaborates with administrators from local districts to provide coursework. The University of San Diego provides continuing education credit for adult learners. The curriculum meets the Level I and Level II standards. LACOE is actively involved in the transition from the Vocational Education to the Career Technical Education program standards.

Coursework is offered in the evening throughout southern California. Saturday workshops on technology and classroom management are also available. To complete Level I candidates take a 90 hour course with 40 hours in class and a 50 hour project. Instructors provide feedback on activities presented in class through demonstration or examination or both. Candidates complete a portfolio on their project. Upon successful completion of Level I coursework, candidates receive a transcript indicating the appropriate number of units with passing grades.

Level I begins with a program orientation. Topics covered in coursework include: classroom management, cognitive development, learning styles, student learning assessment, meeting the needs of special needs students, working with English learners and teaching to standards. Coursework includes readings, presentations in class, comprehensive class projects related to their own discipline and classroom and a final examination or project.

To complete Level II, candidates take a 90 hour course with 40 hours in class and a 50 hour project. Instructors provide feedback on activities presented in class through demonstration or examination. Level II focuses on the more sophisticated aspects of teaching to include: interpersonal skills, young adult and adult literacy, instructional technology, CA safety laws as well as other legal requirements for teachers. Some class time is devoted to current issues and concerns candidates are experiencing in their own classrooms.

In both Levels I and II candidates are required to submit a videotape of their own classrooms. Candidates receive feedback from instructors on each video. In interviews with current candidates and program completers they talked about the experienced and resourceful instructors, positive aspects of the projects that were related to their own discipline and classroom and appreciated learning about and from the diverse courses their fellow candidates taught.

The team found two Program Standards to be ***Met with Concerns***. These Program Standards are part of both the Adult Education and Career Technical Education programs.

Program Standard 3: Resources Allocated to the Program

This standard was found to be Met with Concerns. While many stakeholders noted that there appeared to be significant improvement, there remains a concern about consistency of customer service. Interviews with multiple stakeholders revealed unevenness in the timeliness and responsiveness to their needs. This included returning phone calls and e-mails, processing of credentials and responding to district needs. There were also positive comments about these processes and current improvement efforts.

Program Standard 6: Program Development and Evaluation

This standard was found to be Met with Concerns. There is limited evidence of a “comprehensive and on-going system of program development and evaluation.” The team did not find that there were adequate “opportunities for meaningful involvement by diverse community groups in program development and evaluation.” There is some evidence of an emerging system of data collection. The data, primarily anecdotal, are self assessments by candidates, and end of course surveys.

Summary

Overall the team found evidence of effective leadership and instructional personnel. The program has evolved recently to better serve its many stakeholders. The majority of candidates are pleased with the content of the program and quality of instruction.